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COUNTRY Indochina

SUBJECT Situation in Nghe An Province

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Opposition to Democratic Republic of Vietnam (DRV)

1. The Dan Chu Dang (Democratic Party) has a National Committee that is completely dominated by Communists. Duong Duc Hien, the Secretary General of this party, is only a figurehead and is controlled by two assistants, Hoang Minh Chinh¹ and Luu Quy Ky. The latter was at one time a teacher at the Lycee Khai Dinh in Hue and is now editor of Cuu Quoc (National Salvation), official organ of the Lien Viet. Both are members of the Communist Party of Indochina (PCI). However, the intellectuals and the progressive small land owners, who constitute a majority in the Dan Chu Dang, are in opposition to the Communists. The Dan Chu Dang is poorly directed and orders from the Central Committee are loosely interpreted on lower echelons. Opposition forces within the party have increased since 1950 when Communist domination became more pronounced and when more severe austerity measures were imposed on the people of this area.
2. The Buddhist Corporation, formed in 1947, is composed primarily of prominent Buddhists and land owners. The corporation is more political than religious but has so far shown only passive resistance to the DRV.
3. The Catholics had been allowed relative freedom by the DRV prior to the attack on Phat Diem in late 1951, in contrast to the strong controls exercised over the Dan Chu Dang and the Buddhists. However, since 1951 the DRV policy toward Catholics has been reversed. By considering the individual priests as sole owners of the Church's property and taxing them accordingly, the Catholic Church has been dispossessed of almost all its property in this area. In support of the Church's refusal to pay these taxes, rioting broke out in several places, notably at Xa Doai (105-07; 21-15) and Nong Cong (105-42; 19-44).

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Anti-DRV Activities of the Dan Chu Dang

4. The DRV taxes, which are considered excessive, now include: national loans (cong phieu quoc trai), campaigns for donating private property to the state (hien dien), provisional loans (tam vay), agricultural taxes (thue nong nghiep), and commercial and industrial taxes (thue thuong nghiep). The anti-DRV members of the Dan Chu Dang have taken the following measures in opposition to the agricultural tax:
 - a. They have started a whispering campaign intimating that the taxes are not needed for national defense but are imposed in order to impoverish the people and thus facilitate the advent of a Bolshevik state.
 - b. They have encouraged land owners to cultivate only enough land to meet their own needs. The people have followed this practice to such an extent that the DRV has decreed that all uncultivated land must be exploited.
 - c. They have encouraged the people to delay payment of their taxes; the 1951 taxes have not yet been paid in full.
 - d. They have persuaded religious organizations to stage protest rallies.
5. Many schools have refused to include Communist propaganda in the school curriculum.
6. A 25-percent rent reduction (giam to) was proposed by the DRV in mid-1950. To counteract this proposal, land owners have been encouraged to organize their loyal tenants and to refuse to sell or rent land to Communists. The DRV is now trying to make the owners accept the proposal by making the reduction only 10 percent.

Mobilization

7. The mobilization program for Nghe An which began in early 1950 had reached the following stages by January 1952:
 - a. The 13th series of civilian mobilization, which calls up civilians between the ages of 18 and 49. They are used to carry rice and salt to Viet Bac and to bring back arms received from Communist China. Part of the 3-month conscription period is devoted to military training.
 - b. The 9th series for enlisted men, which calls up men between the ages of 19 and 40.
 - c. The 6th series for officer training, which conscripts students for training as infantry platoon commanders.
8. Although each draft call is preceded by a long period of propaganda and conscription is made to appear voluntary, the draft is actually compulsory and all evaders are punished.

Chinese Communist Aid

9. Chinese Communist arms and ammunition have been received in Interzone IV. Chinese make rare and unpublicized appearances in the area. After the Ha Nam - Ninh Binh operations, the 304, 308, and 312 Divisions were in the area for recruitment and training, and six groups of four to seven Chinese advisors each were noted among the troops. The Chinese were lodged in large houses, each provided with two Chinese bodyguards and five Vietnamese soldiers for household work. Committees of the Women's Organization prepared their food, which was superior to that of Vietnamese officers of the same rank and included coffee, sugar, meat and British or American cigarettes.

Prison Camp at Le Nghia

10. There is a DRV prison camp for French and European troops at Le Nghia (105-21; 18-51). General Lepage is believed to be among the prisoners. Most of the prisoners now speak and write Vietnamese and are undergoing a Marxist reeducation treatment.

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Morale of the Inhabitants

- 25X1 11. The [] admits that in Interzone IV the inhabitants' morale and confidence in the DRV government has fallen greatly since 1949. This can be attributed to the increased awareness that Communists dominate the DRV government and that DRV economic measures apply not only to proprietors but to all classes of people.

Morale of the DRV Troops

- 25X1 12. [] troop morale was much lower in 1951 than in 1949, in spite of a 70-percent increase in PCI membership. Low morale was indicated by several cases of desertion, sabotage against the PCI, the strike of new recruits at Dien Chau in May 1951, and the desertion of Vu Quang, Chief of Military Intelligence for the 304 Division in 1950, just before the Ha Nam - Ninh Binh operations.
13. In order to improve troop morale, DRV military authorities have decided to end propaganda in the army, cease admissions into the PCI, and increase the number of reeducation courses that are given after each mission. Propaganda aimed at the entire population has been stepped up.
- 25X1A 1. [] Comment. This is the first time that information available to this office has mentioned Hoang Minh Chinh in connection with the Dan Chu Dang. Heretofore he has usually been mentioned in his capacity as president of the Vietnamese Federation of Youth.

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